



# THE LITTLE PIANIST

By Brij Kothari

There was once a little boy named Azul. He loved to play the piano and dreamed of becoming a pianist some day. Every Sunday, Azul went to his piano class, and practised every night at home, just before going to bed. Azul became good at it because he was so sincere. He would forget to brush his teeth but would never forget to practise playing the piano!

One day, Vicki, his piano teacher told him, "Azul, you will perform tomorrow in front of a large audience. You are getting to be quite the pianist! Your fingers move like a squirrel on the piano keys. But there is something missing." "What is it?" Azul just had to know. He really... really wanted to be, not just a good pianist, but a great pianist. Vicki smiled. She whispered into Azul's ear a piano teacher's secret.

"Play with your heart, not with your fingers." As always, Vicki pulled out her box of stickers. Azul held out his hand and Vicki stuck on it, a gorgeous sticker of a butterfly. "There, think of this butterfly when you want to play with your heart," she said. That day, when all the children played in the park, Azul just stared at his butterfly. He wondered, "I can play with my fingers because I can move them. I can touch the piano keys. How can I play with my heart? I can't see my heart." For the first time, in a long time, Azul went to bed without playing the piano. The night before his performance, he did not practise because he did not know how to play with his heart! When Azul woke up, he looked for the butterfly sticker. Oh no! The sticker was gone too! Now Azul was nervous. Really nervous. He tried playing the piano, but his fingers would just not move! However, that did not stop the clock from ticking. Soon it was performance time. The piano was in the middle of a round stage, surrounded by rows of people. Azul walked onto the stage, sat on the piano bench and closed his eyes for a second. Remembering Vicki's words, he thought of the butterfly. In the quiet of the auditorium, Azul heard the flutter of wings. A butterfly sat on his shoulder and started to hum a tune. His fingers began to move by themselves. His heart began to play the butterfly's song.

THE END



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